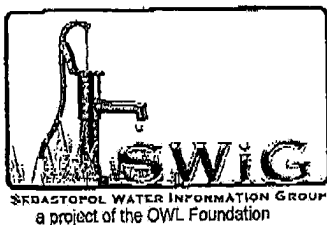


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December 14, 2007

Regional Water Quality Control Board
5550 Skylane Blvd
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
FAX: 707-523-0135

Subject: Sebastopol Water Information Group Comment on North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board Work Plan To Control Sediment In Sediment-Impaired Watersheds

Sebastopol Water Information Group (SWiG) is an alliance of west County well owners and Sebastopol residents, formed to provide accurate scientific information bearing on water supplies and quality. We submit the following comments in support of **Regional Board Resolution No. R1-2007-0095** as it applies to the Russian River.

Land-use practices in the Russian River watershed have introduced large sediment volumes into the Russian River mainstream, which have diminished beneficial uses of the river. SWiG endorses the Coast Action Group's recommended actions, which will be necessary for compliance with State and Federal laws to control sediment, in particular developing and implementing State- and EPA-approved TMDLs. Approval of funding, and implementation of actions, programs, and tasks, as described in the Work Plan to Control Sediment in Sediment-Impaired Watersheds (Work Plan), is crucial for protecting the Russian River system, for recovering many of its beneficial uses, and for attaining established water quality standards.

A broad spectrum of degrading land uses have impaired the Russian River system, including the Laguna de Santa Rosa (LSR). Polluting road construction, industrial and residential development, urban storm waters and waste water treatment and disposal facilities, dams (including illegal water impoundments), timber harvests, and agricultural land uses—all have diminished the LSR's water quality, and the quality of LSR water that reaches the Russian River. Furthermore, the Russian River and LSR interactions are hydrologically complex and poorly known. Assessment and allocation of responsibility to specific sources will be difficult.

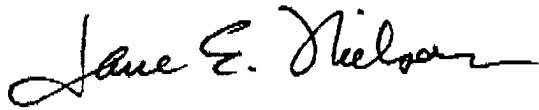
The Work Plan outlines the steps necessary for addressing outstanding sediment issues and for moving toward the goal of attaining approved water quality standards for the Russian River. Among the Work Plan's most important tasks should be developing the Russian River TMDL for Sediment. In addition, the Basin Plan Amendment for Excess Sediment Control, and Stream and Wetland Protection Basin Plan Amendment must be implemented to address excess sediment inputs and the related impairment issues of Temperature, Nutrients, and lack of Dissolved Oxygen. Outreach will be a major component in the hierarchy of tasks.

Regional Board staff time would help address sediment impacts in the Russian River watershed if directed toward specific activities, such as forestland conversion to vineyard use, road construction

and maintenance, and the like. SWiG strongly agrees that the Board should obtain grant funding adequate to assure the long-term success of restoration projects.

The Russian River TMDL likely will be the most complex TMDL project to be undertaken on any of the Work Plan's northern California rivers, involving many types of degrading land uses. The Regional Board should therefore give high priority to developing the Russian River TMDL.

Sincerely Yours,



Dr. Jane Nielson, President
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cc:

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